

we must remain focused on job creation and economic growth. As part of my Main Street jobs agenda, I'm focused on bringing opportunities such as STEM education for our students and for those looking for work. As part of this effort, I've cosponsored the bipartisan, bicameral Startup Act 2.0.

The United States is the higher education destination for the world. This is a testament to the strength of these institutions and the value of the degrees. But too often, foreign students come here to learn, and then have little choice but to return to their home countries after they are through.

Students with advanced degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are forced to go home with that knowledge, with the ideas and aspirations, aspirations to change the world and bring new technologies. Many of them want to stay here to make something of themselves here in our country because it is still the best place for ideas to become realities. And what we do is we force them to go back to their own country, to compete against us here in the United States.

These ideas become solutions which, in turn, become job-creating companies. According to a study by the National Foundation for American Policy, immigrants founded or cofounded almost half of the top 50 venture-backed companies in the United States.

Since our Nation's founding, Mr. Speaker, immigrants have flourished, along with our economy. America becomes a richer and more dynamic society by encouraging the best and the brightest from all over the world to set up shop here on our soil. That is why I'm honored to cosponsor the bipartisan, bicameral Startup Act 2.0 that will help get Americans back to work, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

America becomes a richer and more dynamic society by encouraging the best and the brightest from all over the world to come here to our country.

The people I welcomed as new citizens this week do not have time for gridlock in Washington, Mr. Speaker. The American public doesn't have time for gridlock in Washington. We must move forward and find common ground to help the millions of Americans who are working toward their American Dream, to help them get back to work.

READ THE BILLS AND COMPARE THE TWO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this message is only for persons who may get sick. If you will never get sick, this message is not for you, N-O-T, not for you. Only for those who will get sick.

Mr. Speaker, I hold in my left hand a copy of the Affordable Care Act. I hold in my right hand the replacement bill that my colleagues across the aisle have been talking about.

This bill has passed the Congress of the United States of America. It is more than 2,000 pages. It was condemned for being too long, which may explain the size of this bill. This bill has within it preventive care. This bill has within it a cap on administrative costs. You must spend 80 to 85 percent of the money that insurance companies collect on health care. This bill protects persons who are under 26 years of age, as they can stay on their parents' insurance. This bill covers persons with preexisting conditions.

I had to read this bill. My constituents insisted that I read this bill before voting on it.

And my constituents want me to read this bill. This is the replacement bill, and they want me to be sure that I understand the replacement bill before I vote to repeal.

So what I'd like to do now, for all within the sound of my voice and who are viewing this, I want to read the replacement bill. I shall read the replacement bill. Let me just read half of it first. I shall now read one-half of the replacement bill. Now, I shall read the other half of the replacement bill.

Now, some of you will say, AL, you read too fast; I didn't pick up all of that. So, for those who listen slowly, or those who may have missed it, I shall now read the replacement bill in its entirety. That's the replacement bill.

Here is the bill that we can read. I'm going to ask that I be allowed to place the replacement bill in the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that persons consider the empirical evidence as well as the invisible evidence. When you weigh the empirical evidence against the invisible evidence, you decide whether we should vote to repeal.

Now, there may be some who contend, well, AL, really, I'd just like to go back to the way things were. Let's quickly go back to the way things were. Gladys Knight had a song titled, "The Way We Were."

Here is the way we were in 2009. In 2009, when we were considering replacement, we were spending \$2.5 trillion a year on health care. That's a big number. Hard to get your mind around it. That's \$79,000 a second. It was, at that time, 17.6 percent of the GDP.

We were spending \$100 billion a year on persons who were uninsured. It was projected that by 2018 we'd spend \$4.4 trillion, which would have been 20.3 percent of GDP, which is \$139,000 a second.

In my State of Texas we had 6 million people who were uninsured. In Harris County, where I have my congressional district, we had 1.1 million people who were uninsured. Twenty percent of the State's children were uninsured. Fifty million Americans were uninsured. 45,000 persons per year were dying because of a lack of insurance. That's one person every 12 minutes.

And if you don't like that, call Harvard. I got the statistics from Harvard.

The system was not sustainable. This is why we embarked upon producing this bill.

So I beg that those who insisted that I read this bill before voting, please understand that before you vote, you ought to read this bill and compare the two.

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COMMUTER SAVINGS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. HAYWORTH) for 5 minutes.

Ms. HAYWORTH. As a frequent rider and former commuter on New York's mass transit system, I know how important public transportation is.

Alone, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority, or MTA, transports more than 8.5 million commuters across metropolitan New York every day. In the district I'm privileged to serve—New York's 19th Congressional District—which includes Westchester, Orange, Rockland, Dutchess, and Putnam Counties, the MTA's 31 Metro-North Railroad stations serve 11,000 passengers every weekday.

Our Hudson Valley's mass transit commuters lost part of their recent tax credits for employer-provided mass transit benefits as of January 1 of this year. Commuters utilizing the mass transit portion have seen their credits drop from \$230 per month to \$125 per month, which means that their commuting costs have increased. In contrast, commuters utilizing the driving and parking benefits have seen an automatic increase from \$230 per month to \$240 per month, which is why I introduced the Commuter Savings Act on June 29.

This legislation would extend parity between the mass transit and parking portions of the transportation tax credit, which would increase mass transit benefits from \$125 per month to \$240 per month. Mass transit minimizes traffic congestion, reduces fuel consumption, and limits the wear and tear on our roads and bridges. It's really a great win for all of us even if we don't use mass transit. The Commuter Savings Act will directly help more than 70,000 of our Hudson Valley neighbors, and the bill is retroactive to January 1 of this year, which will provide mass transit commuters with a full 2 years of certainty in their mass transit benefits.

For the tens of thousands of Hudson Valley residents and millions of Americans across the country who rely on safe and affordable public transportation and for all of us who enjoy the benefits of those fellow Americans using mass transit, I urge my colleagues to join me and my fellow primary cosponsors, Representatives PETER KING and BOB DOLD, in giving our mass transit commuters a break in these tough economic times.

JULIE DOYLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) for 5 minutes.